



NEWS YOU CAN USE *February 2018*

NEWS

[Pending Home Sales Rise Slightly](#)

[Pending home sales](#) recorded a minor gain in November both on a monthly and annualized basis, according to NAR. In 2018, existing-home sales and price growth are forecast to slow, primarily because of the altered tax benefits of homeownership affecting some high-cost areas

[Video: Housing Data for November](#)

NAR's latest "Housing Minute" video provides a quick overview of housing market conditions in November. [Access and share video.](#)

[NAR Insurance Program](#)

The annual [NAR Insurance Program](#) materials for 2018 are now being mailed to all REALTOR® associations and regional MLSs. The base coverage is provided at no charge to associations and MLSs, and associations have the option to purchase excess coverage. The deadline for purchasing excess coverage is Monday, April 2. New to the program for 2018 is enhanced cyber coverage, which will protect an association from attacks on its computer network. Watch a [video](#) about the program.

[NAR Reorganizes Senior Staff](#)

NAR has [reorganized its senior management team](#) to serve its 1.3 million members more effectively. Among the changes: NAR's Government Affairs and Community and Political Affairs divisions are merged into a new Political Advocacy group, and Communications, Marketing, and Meetings are merged into one group.

[Leadership Talks NAR Reorganization](#)

President Elizabeth Mendenhall talked with CEO Bob Goldberg about the association's reorganization in a briefing the NAR Leadership Team taped while meeting in Monterey, Calif. Leadership members also used this first [Leadership Live event](#) to talk about what's next in Washington, the impact of tax reform on home prices and sales, and the importance of the REALTOR® Relief Fund. Other updates looked at association finances and resources available for

commercial members. NAR Immediate Past President Bill Brown attended the event and thanked members for their support during his year.

[2017 Home Sales Best in 11 Years](#)

Home sales [dipped at the end of 2017](#), to a 5.47 million sales pace, but sales for the year, at 5.51 million, were the highest in more than a decade. NAR Research Vice President Paul Bishop said sales would have been even stronger given the country's strong job growth but inventory shortages and other factors kept the market from breaking out.

[NAR Officers Recognized in List](#)

President Elizabeth Mendenhall and CEO Bob Goldberg are among NAR officials included in the annual [Swanepoel Power 200](#) list of the most powerful leaders in residential real estate. It's the second appearance on the list for Mendenhall.

[Voice for Real Estate: Robots](#)

Will robots take over real estate showings? The [latest Voice for Real Estate](#) news video from NAR looks at tech innovations coming to real estate based on the recent Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, why an expanded definition of business owner in a Department of Labor rule helps clear away a hurdle to association health plans for real estate pros, and what to know should another shutdown hit the federal government [Access](#)

[Executive Outreach Starting](#)

NAR is introducing an Executive Outreach Program to ensure open communication and strong partnerships between NAR staff and you and leadership. NAR senior staff have been assigned to the 13 regions to serve as direct points of contact to regional leaders. More information about the program, including a video message from CEO Bob Goldberg, and contact information for senior staff is at [nar.realtor](#). For more info contact [Cindy Sampalis](#).

[Share Info on 50-Year Fair Housing Law](#)

The U.S. Fair Housing Act turns 50 this year. [Share information](#) to recognize the landmark law. Also, the [At Home With Diversity®](#) certification course, which can help you increase your business, and is a good way for you to learn about Fair Housing. A [Spanish language](#) version of the course is available.

[REALTOR® Emeritus: April Deadline](#)

April 2 is the deadline to complete certification forms for [REALTOR® Emeritus status](#) for approval in May at the REALTORS® Legislative Meetings & Trade Expo in Washington. REALTOR® Emeritus status recognizes members who have forty years of membership and have completed at least one year of service at the national association level. For applications filed through 2019, the one-year service requirement may also be met through service at the state or local level. For more info, contact [Mary Glick](#), [800/874-6500, ext. 8831](#).

[Pending Home Sales Move Up Slightly](#)

Pending home sales rose slightly in December, buoyed by a strong job market and rising wages, [NAR says](#). But buyers across the United States continue to be hamstrung by a scarcity of properties for sale, which could keep sales from rising in 2018.

[Good Neighbor Award](#)

NAR is accepting entries for the Good Neighbor Awards, which recognize REALTORS® who give back to their communities through volunteer work. Five winners will get national publicity and \$10,000 for their nonprofit. NAR offers many ways to help publicize the Call for Entries, including free ads and pre-written stories. Applications deadline is May 4. For more information, go to nar.realtor/gna or contact [Sara Geimer](#).

[Video: December Housing Data](#)

NAR's latest "Housing Minute" video offers a quick look at key data about the housing market in December. [Access and share video](#).

UPDATES

[Don't Impede Construction Lending, NAR Says](#)

NAR has joined other housing industry groups in asking federal banking officials to further clarify the definition of loans used for acquisition, development, or construction as they move forward with a proposal to update risk-based capital requirements. [Deta](#)

[Acting Rural Housing Chief Named](#)

Curtis Anderson, deputy administrator of the Rural Utilities Service under President George W. Bush, has been appointed acting administrator of the Rural Housing Service. [More](#).

[NAR: Maintain Appraiser Experience Hours](#)

NAR [recommends](#) the Appraiser Qualifications Board not reduce the number of hours of experience an appraiser must have to meet licensing requirements. Also, NAR supports having appraisers complete 150 credit hours in core requirements and says appraisers shouldn't have to have a college degree.

[Court Sides With Adm. on CFPB Chief](#)

The Trump administration [won another round in court](#) on its appointment of Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney to serve as acting head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Mulvaney's appointment has been challenged because the outgoing director, Richard Cordray, appointed someone else to the post.

[Reminder on Radon Testing](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is [reminding people](#) to get their homes tested for radon, the naturally occurring cancer-causing gas. January was Radon Awareness Month.

[Mendenhall Acknowledges End of Shutdown](#)

NAR President Elizabeth Mendenhall [acknowledged](#) lawmakers for reopening the government after a three-day shutdown, although another impasse could hit the government after the three-week measure expires. NAR Government Affairs has [posted a memo](#) explaining immediate and longer-term impacts on real estate transactions should another shutdown hit.

[Labor Rule Could Help AHPs](#)

Analysts in an NAR [Government Affairs video](#) explain how a U.S. Department of Labor proposal clears away a hurdle to the creation of association health plans (AHPs) for real estate professionals, although other hurdles would remain even if the proposal takes effect.

[Tax Law Impact on Income](#)

The new 20-percent business income deduction, passed as part of the tax cut law, could be good for you. NAR analysts walk through the new deduction and other aspects of the law that affect real estate in a [video recording](#) of a Facebook Live event.

[Rule Aims for Expanded Assoc. Health Plans](#)

The U.S. Department of Labor [took a first step](#) toward expanding access to health coverage through association health plans by issuing a notice of proposed rulemaking that would broaden the definition of employers to include working owners, or sole proprietors or the self-employed. The notice also would broaden a provision that could allow for more employers to band together if they are in the same industry or share certain geographic areas. NAR will send comments on the notice to the department, which is taking input until March 6.

[More Construction Workers Needed](#)

Temporary visa policy changes could increase construction labor so builders can increase home supplies, NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun [says in a brief comment](#) on the latest federal job-growth report.

[\\$235,000 is Typical for Recent Home Buyers](#)

NAR data from the last year show that \$235,000 was the median price of homes that people bought. They typically put down 10% and most didn't have too much trouble getting a mortgage. NAR [has an infographic](#) that encapsulates recent findings.

[Stay of Water Rule in Question](#)

A nationwide stay of the federal Waters of the United States rule may no longer remain in place following a unanimous Supreme Court ruling that the court that issued the stay does not have jurisdiction over petitions for review of the rule, known as WOTUS. The Environmental Protection Agency will also continue work on repealing and replacing the rule. [Details](#).

[CFPB Looks at Investigative Process](#)

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is seeking input on how it collects information when investigating consumer protection complaints. The agency's goal is to minimize the burden on companies when it tries to gather information. [More](#).

RESOURCES

[REALTOR® Party Website Up and Running](#)

The new [REALTORParty.com website](#) replaced the Realtor Action Center on Dec. 29. The new site provides advocacy materials and is intended to facilitate engagement between your association and your members on advocacy matters.

[Applications Open for Leadership Academy](#)

The application process for the 2019 NAR Leadership Academy is open, REALTOR® University has announced. Applications will remain open until March 9. [Details and application](#). For more info, contact [Judy Perez](#).

[The Gift of .realtor™](#)

Gift yourself a [free .realtor™ domain](#), which will help you stake your claim online and elevate your professional brand. Cozy up by the fireplace and dive into the resources available to help you communicate this benefit of membership.

[RPR® Offers Commercial Data and Tools](#)

[RPR® Commercial](#) has data on more than 35 million off-market properties, 320,000 listed properties, and 106,000 leasing opportunities—and is available to REALTORS® at no additional cost as a membership benefit. NAR is exploring additional options to ensure members have the business support they need.

[RLI Announces Awards Program for Land Agents](#)

The REALTORS® Land Institute (RLI) is launching an [awards program](#) to recognize the top producers in the land real estate business. The Land Report, an industry publication, is the official sponsor of the Apex Awards, which will be presented on March 13 at the 2018 National Land Conference in Nashville, Tenn.

[Back At You Media: Social Plans Available](#)

Promote yourself and your listings via Facebook, LinkedIn, and other social platforms with automated solutions from Back At You Media. Exclusive agent

plans and broker-owner enterprise plans, all with savings, are now available through the [REALTOR Benefits® Program](#).

[Discount for MIPIM International Conference](#)

NAR has negotiated [discounted registration fees](#) for members who wish to attend MIPIM, the world's largest commercial real estate conference.

[REALTOR® Party Outreach Grants Changed](#)

Several NAR community outreach grant programs have been modified for 2018: Level 3 grants for [Smart Growth](#) and [Housing Opportunity](#) are not available, the [Placemaking Grant](#) has been reduced to a maximum of \$3,000, and the [Diversity Initiative Grants](#) have a new Level 2 category in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act.

[Land Markets Survey Released](#)

U.S. land values were up 3 percent in 2017 and land sales were up 4 percent, reflecting a strong national land market, according to the annual [Land Markets Survey](#) from the REALTORS® Land Institute and NAR.

[New Terra Firma Magazine Available](#)

The 2018 winter edition of [Terra Firma magazine](#), published by the REALTORS® Land Institute, is now available. The magazine gives insights into the land market and its outlook, strategic business planning for real estate pros, and more.

[2017 President's Cup Winners Announced](#)

Sixteen states met all nine President's Cup goals in 2017—four involving advocacy and five related to RPAC. The [2017 President's Cup Report](#) is now available.

LEGAL

[Broker Liable for Altering Commission](#)

The Court of Appeals of Texas, San Antonio, affirmed a lower court's ruling that a listing broker breached his fiduciary duty and engaged in fraud when he increased the amount of his commission without receiving the seller's consent. [More](#).

[Newsletter Examines Third Party Liability](#)

NAR's [Legal Pulse newsletter](#) for the third quarter of 2017 looks at the liability of inspectors, appraisers, and other third parties involved in real estate transactions.

[NAR: Clarify Website Accessibility Standards](#)

The federal government should resume efforts to develop accessibility standards for websites under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that would provide clarity to entities such as real estate agencies and brokerages, NAR says in a [letter](#) to the Justice Department. NAR has also asked the government not to

pursue enforcement actions regarding website accessibility under the ADA until it implements new regulations.

[Avoiding Copyright Infringement](#)

The latest [Window to the Law video](#) from NAR Legal Affairs looks at what you need to know to avoid copyright infringement.

[View Summaries of 2018 Policy Changes](#)

Learn about [policy changes](#) made for 2018 by the Membership Policy and Board Jurisdiction Committee, the Multiple Listing Issues and Policies Committee, and the Professional Standards Committee.

[Possible Contamination a Material Fact](#)

A Maryland appellate court has upheld sanctions imposed by the state's real estate commission against a real estate professional for failing to notify the buyers of a home of a possible gas station leak that might have contaminated the water supply. [Details.](#)